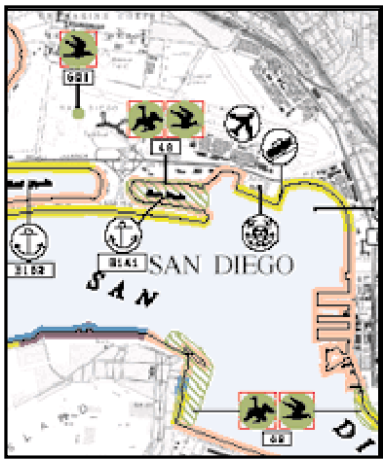
Environmental Sensitivity Index Mapping

The most widely used approach to sensitive environment mapping in the United States is NOAA's Environmental Sensitivity Index (ESI). This approach systematically compiles information in standard formats for coastal shoreline sensitivity, biological resources, and human-use resources. ESI maps are useful for identifying sensitive resources before a spill occurs so that protection priorities can be established and cleanup strategies designed in advance. Using ESIs in spill response reduces the environmental consequences of the spill and cleanup efforts.

Sensitive environment mapping must be an integral component of overall spill planning. Sensitivity maps are not an end in themselves; rather, they are a starting point for prevention, planning, and response actions. The resource definitions in NOAA's sensitivity maps provide guidance for local organizations developing spill plans. Recently published manuals, including the Mechanical Protection Guidelines, the Shoreline Assessment Manual, the Shoreline Assessment Job Aid, and the Shoreline Countermeasures series for temperate, tropical, and freshwater environments are examples where the ESI definitions are the basis for effective, site-specific planning.



How to Get ESI Data

ESI data are published as color-coded, laminated paper maps that are assembled into bound 11" x 17" atlases typically covering a single state's coastal zone. Although the atlases have limited distribution, you can easily order individual maps for an area. NOAA also publishes digital ESI data on CD-ROM in formats suitable for local printing with free software and for use with Geographic Information Systems.

Digital ESI Data

Beyond spill planning, NOAA is undertaking a wide-ranging program to promote open ESI standards and to develop digital ESI databases for high-priority coastal areas in partnership with states and other Federal agencies. NOAA is developing guidelines for ESI data users that assist data exchange, provide a mechanism for evaluating data quality, and allow the development of computer-applications for displaying and reproducing ESI maps. ESI guidelines, data, and maps should help users in both government and the private sector develop applications for coastal management activities that go beyond traditional spill response.

The table on the reverse side shows areas where ESI maps are available and the media in which the maps are available. To order individual maps or digital data send electronic mail to: library@hazmat.noaa.gov

For additional information: visit the website: **http://response.restoration.noaa.gov/esi/esiintro.html**, send e-mail: esiinfo@hazmat.noaa.gov, or call: 206/526-6317.

Status of Our ESI Atlases

Atlas/Paper Map Release Date	PDF	Arc Export	MOSS	ArcView	ESI-Viewer	Paper
Alabama/1996	●	●	●	●	●	●
Alaska:						
Cook Inlet/1985-94						●
Kodiak/1997						●
No. Bristol Bay/1982						●
Norton Sound & Pribilof Is./1983						●
Prince William Sound/2000	●	●	●	●	●	●
Shelikof Strait/1983						●
So. Bristol Bay/1982						●
SE Alaska/1992						●
No. Slope/1999	●	●	●	●	●	●
California:						
No. California/1994	●	●	●	●	●	●
So. California/1995	●	●	●	●	●	●
Central California/1994	●	●	●	●	●	●
San Francisco Bay/1998	●	●	●	●	●	●
Connecticut/1984						●
Delaware, New Jersey*, Pennsylvania/1996	●	●	●	●	●	●
Florida:						
Apalachicola River/1984						●
Northeast Florida/1981	●					●
South Florida/1996	●					●
West Florida/1995	●					●
West Peninsular - 1/1996	●					●
West Peninsular - 2/1996	●					●
Georgia/1997	●	●	●	●	●	●
Great Lakes:						
Lake Erie System/1985						●
Lake Huron/1994						●
Lake Michigan, Eastern Shore/1985						●
North Lake Michigan/1994						●
South Lake Michigan/1994						●
West Lake Michigan/1994						●
Lake Ontario/1993						●
Lake Superior/1994 (3 vol.)						●
St. Lawrence River/1985						●
Guam/1994						●
Hawaii/1986						●
Louisiana/1989						●
Maine:						
Downeast Maine/1985						●
Mid-coast Maine/1985						●
So. Maine & New Hampshire/1983						●
Maryland/1984						
Massachusetts/1999	●	●	●	●	●	●
Mississippi/1995	●	●	●	●	●	●
New York:						
Long Island/1985						●
New York Harbor & Hudson River/1985						●
St. Lawrence River/1983						●
St. Marys River/1986						●
North Carolina/1996 (3 vol.)	●	●	●	●	●	●
Oregon:						
Oregon Coast/1983						●
Oregon & Washington (Columbia River)/1989						●
Puerto Rico/1999	●	●	●	●	●	●
Rhode Island/1983						●
South Carolina/1996	●	●	●	●	●	●
Texas - Upper Coast/1995	●					●
U.S. Virgin Islands/1999						●
Virginia/1984						●
Washington:						
Central & So. Puget Sound/1985						●
Strait of Juan de Fuca & No. Puget Sound/1985						●

* New Jersey south of Barnegat Inlet.